

ADDITIONS TO THE KNOWN LEPIDOPTERA
(HETEROCERA) OF THE MALTESE ISLANDS

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Since the publication in 1973 of my booklet *The Moths of the Maltese Islands*, a number of additional species have been taken by myself and by friends who have kindly passed on to me their captures, and whose names appear in the following account. All the species recorded from Rabat were taken by my friend Paul Sammut.

ARCTIIDAE

Lithosia quadra L. (Lithosiinae) Ghadira, Mellieha Bay, a single male taken by L. Cassar, 3rd August 1976.

NOLIDAE

Nola cristatula Hbn. Rabat, four taken 14th July 1979, two in June 1981 and one in September 1981.

NOCTUIDAE

Dryobotodes tenebrosa Esp. (Noctuiinae). Benghisa, one taken 18th October 1979.

Euxoa robusta Eversm. (Noctuiinae). Ghadira, Mellieha Bay, two taken 6th April 1976; Rabat, one taken 26th September 1981.

Mythimna prominens Walk. (Hadeninae). Ghadira, three taken 6th April 1976; Rabat, one taken 25th September, one taken 18th October 1981; Mtahleb, two taken 29th September 1982.

Mamestra blenna Hbn.: *peregrina* Tr. (Hadeninae). Ghadira, taken 15th April 1974 by P. Sammut.

M. brassicae L. Benghisa, 6th June 1974. It seems it was quite common by the end of last century according to Prof. Borg in *Daily Malta Chronicle* 9.I.1899.

Cleophora chabordis Ob. ab. *albicans* Stgr. (Cuculliinae). Rabat, taken 20th March 1977.

Blepharita vallettai De Laever (Cuculliinae). Recorded in error (in *The Moths of the Maltese Islands*, p. 31) as *Blepharita solieri* Boisd. subsp. *spinosa* Chretien (cf. De Laever, *Shilap. Revta. lepid.*, 8 (31) (1980): 197-200).

Athetis flava Ob. (Acronictinae). Rabat, taken 23rd May 1974.

Eutelina adulatatrix Hbn. (Euteliinae). San Gwann, taken 26th October 1974.

Catocala conjuncta Esp. (Catocalinae). Buskett, 2nd August 1979, I disturbed this moth while beating ivy for micros, when it
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flew straight into my net; a week later two more were disturbed at the same locality; it was also seen 4th August 1980, and in August 1981 and 1982. The species is very local, being found only in the vicinity of a few old oak trees (*Quercus robur*) growing in a garden. It is surprising that this beautiful moth was not discovered long before at this locality which is so much frequented by collectors.

C. nymphagoga Esp. Buskett, on 28th June 1973 I boxed a moth in broad daylight, and the following day disturbed two more from under an oak tree. P. Sammut took two the evening of 28th June 1973: they were on the empty bottles of Coca-cola. I noted it on 18th July 1980, and understand it was again seen in July 1982. This is another species that appears to have been overlooked.

Grammodes stolidus F. (Catocalinae). First taken by A. Bezzina at M'Skala in July 1976. I took a second one at Benghisa, 3rd September 1977. Three taken by J. Briffa at Airport Hotel, Luqa, 4th September 1980.

Clytie sancta Stgr. (Catocalinae). Luqa, a female taken at Airport Hotel, by J. Briffa, 4th September 1980, is suspected Middle East import.

Grammodes geometrica Rossi (Catocalinae). Bahrija limits of Rabat, taken July 1977 by S. Schembri. In 1982, I visited this locality and found the species quite common close to the fresh water spring, where it was still on the wing on 9th October, but there may be two broods.

Dysgonia torrida Guenee (Catocalinae). I had this species as long ago as May 1949: it was mixed with *D. algira* L. from which it is somewhat difficult to separate at a glance. I found three larvae in my garden at B'Kara, feeding on *Parietaria officinalis* from which pupae formed 3rd, 7th, 10th October, producing moths 28th, 30th May and 5th June 1957. I also formed larvae at Attard feeding on *Ricinus communis*.

Herminia crinalis Tr. (Hypeninae). Buskett, taken by me in 1949 whilst beating ivy. Still found there from May to late September, but less common than *Hypena obsitalis* Hbn. This species was inadvertently omitted from my 1973 publication.

GEOMETRIDAE

Chlorissa viridata L. (Geometrinae). Benghisa, one taken 20th February 1974.

Idaea determinata Stdgr. (Sterrhinae). Benghisa, taken 7th October 1976.

I. rubicostata Z. ab *incarnaria* H.-S. Benghisa, taken 17th October 1974.

Ortholitha chenopodiata L. (Larentiinae). Benghisa, taken 15th November 1974.

Ecliptoptera silaceata D. & S. (Larentiinae). Bnghisa, 16th March 1974.

Menophra japygiaria Costa (Boarmiinae). Buskett, two taken by P. Sammut, 12th October 1974.

PYRALIDAE

Actenia glaucinalis Hbn. (Pyalinae). B'Kara, taken 16th October 1973 and 20th October 1975.

Dattinia infulalis Led. (Pyalinae). St. Lucian Tower, M'Xlokk, taken at light by S. Schembri, 10th October 1975.

Euclasta splendidalis H.-S. (Pyraustinae). Ghar Lapsi, 9th October 1974, taken by beating.

Mecyna asinalis Hbn. (Pyraustinae). Bnghisa, taken 3rd July 1975 and 30th April 1977; Rabat, taken by P. Sammut 27th June 1979 and 30th June 1981. A variable moth both in size and colour.

Eurrhypara hortulata L. (Pyraustinae). Qormi, one taken by C. Briffa, 26th May 1980.

Tegostoma subditalis Hbn. (Odontiinae). Bnghisa, taken 7th October 1973.

TORTRICIDAE

Aphelia unicolorana Dup. Bnghisa, taken 14th April 1973.

Cnephasia oxientana Alph. Fort St. Lucian, M'Xlokk, by S. Schembri, 10th October 1975.

GELECHIIDAE

Ethmia bipunctella F. B'Kara, two taken at light, 2nd September 1974.

TINEIDAE

Ateliotum insulare Rebel M'Skala, one taken by A. Bezzina, 23 November 1978.

SESIIDAE (AEGERIDAE)

Bembecia scopigera Scop. Wardija, taken amongst *Rubus ulmifolius* Schott on 24th May 1975; and again by S. Schembri at Wied Quirda in August 1977. In 1981, I noticed it in good numbers at Wardija during September and October, resting on dried *Galactitis* sp. and flying with the *Polistes omissus* when it is not easy to distinguish one from the other.

Chamaesphecia sp. near *cerifrons* Z. This small sesiid was quite common near Slug Bay, Mellieha, flying among different grasses, June 1979.

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A FEW LEPIDOPTEROUS NOTES FROM S. NORFOLK, EARLY AUG. 1983. — The following observations, made while staying with my good friends Mr. and Mrs. A. W. Gould at Fouldeu, near Swaffham (4.8. viii), are possibly worth reporting.

Much to my surprise I came upon three specimens of *Eilema deplana* Esp. (Buff Footman) at separate spots resting on flowers of devil's-bit scabious beside a broad ride in the pine-woods near Fouldeu, about noon on a warm and intermittently sunny day. Had I been searching for them, others could probably have been found. According to the works at hand (which do not recognize the species as resident in East Anglia) this moth, like all of its group, hides during the day in trees and bushes; so it would be interesting to know whether the habit of daytime resting in the open on flowers represents a change in the species' behaviour. Barrett (1895, *Lep. Brit. Isl.*, 2: 223), writing of the allied *E. complana* L., mentions that it is very fond of sitting on the blossoms of thistle and *Scabiosa arvensis*, but only after dark. Possibly the above instance is not unconnected with the fact that *deplana* seems to have had an unusually good season in 1983; for not only were examples noted at the house lights at Fouldeu, but also, one came to my m.v. lamp here (Charlton, S.E. London) — the first I have seen in this district.

At the Warren Wood, Thetford Forest, *Lycaena phlaeas* L. (Small Copper) was in great profusion everywhere in the rides and open spaces wherever flowers occurred, presenting, for us at least, a most unusual and pleasing sight. I understand that this butterfly is less common than formerly, and indeed I saw no others during my short stay in Norfolk — even in exactly similar conditions in the Fouldeu pine-woods. A collector might have contrived to pick out some varieties, though we (being intent on other quarry) noticed none. No obvious reason for such phenomenal local abundance presents itself.

Finally I may mention that wherever we went *Pyronia tithonus* L. (Gatekeeper) was in evidence, being in fact much the commonest butterfly during my visit. Similar in its ubiquity but of course less numerous was the Pyrale *Udea ferrugalis* Hübn., mostly having a very washed-out appearance, and giving the impression of a large invasion of the species some time previously. — A. A. ALLEN.